

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6609

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9359

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC US CVIS

SUBJECT: RELEASED PDRY AMERICAN PRISONERS: TORHAN AND KOPP

REF: CAIRO 9267

1. TORHAN AND KOPP ARE STILL SCHEDULED TO EMPLANE FOR NEW YORK TOMORROW, SUNDAY, SEPT 21. FLIGHT DATA IS THAT GIVEN PARA 1 REFTEL.

2. TORHAN'S HEALTH IS GOOD. KOPP'S MENTAL STATE HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY, BUT HE HAS STOMACH PROBLEMS AND STILL TIRES EASILY. MR. BOSTON OF HEW SHOULD BE ALERTED TO THIS. DR. LOUGHLIN OF NAMRU WILL BE ON FLIGHT AND CAN PROVIDE ANY SEDATIVES IF NEEDED.

3. CONTENTS OF SANA 2621 CONVEYED TO KOPP. HE IS MOST GRATEFUL.

4. TORHAN AND KOPP HAVE WRITTEN JOINT LETTER OF THANKS TO PRESIDENT SADAT. WE WILL ARRANGE TO FORWARD IT THROUGH MARWAN'S OFFICE.

5. NEWS OF AMCITS RELEASE HAS NOT YET PUBLICLY SURFACED. IN VIEW OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S WISHES, WE HAVE SAID NOTHING ABOUT IT TO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS RESIDENT IN CAIRO. TORHAN AND KOPP ARE UNDERSTANDABLY
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PUZZLED AT LACK OF ANY PRESS REPORTAGE ABOUT THEIR

RELEASE. THEY UNDERSTAND RATIONALE FOR PRESIDENT'S WISHES, BUT AFTER THEIR LONG ORDEAL FIND SITUATION SOMEWHAT ANTI-CLIMACTIC. IN RESPONSE THEIR SPECIFIC QUERY, WE HAVE TOLD THEM THAT WHEN THEY ARE BACK IN THE US. THEY ARE FREE TO TALK TO PRESS. CONSISTENT WITH GUIDELINES RECEIVED FROM MARWAN'S OFFICE, THEY AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE ALSO FREE TO INFORM PRESS OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S EFFECTIVE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE. WHATEVER ELSE THEY MAY WISH TO TELL PRESS ABOUT THEIR ADEN ORDEAL IS, OF COURSE, UP TO THEM.

6. WE ASSUME DEPT SPOKESMAN WILL HAVE TO FIELD QUESTIONS. AS LONG AS GOE CONTINUES TO PREFER NO RPT NO USG STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT DEPT SPOKESMAN CONFINE HIS ANSWERS TO CONFIRMING FACTS ABOUT IMPRISONMENT AND EXPRESSING USG SATISFACTION THAT RELEASE FINALLY OBTAINED AFTER YEARS OF EFFORT BY USG, AND OTHER PARTIES, INCLUDING EGYPTIANS. SINCE TORHAN AND KOPP LIKELY TO GIVE SADAT FULL CREDIT, DEPT COULD ALSO CONFIRM THAT GOE EFFORTS WERE MOST IMPORTANT IN SECURING FINAL RELEASE.

7. WE HAVE NOW HAD A CHANCE TO DEBRIEF BOTH TORHAN AND KOPP IN SOME DETAIL. SUMMARIES BEING SENT SEPTTEL. COMPREHENSIVE REPORTS WILL FOLLOW BY AIRGRAM.
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